[87] [88] theses of the natives. This is how it is refuted by those who contradict me: "When the first black soldiers and their assistants, archers, and spear carriers were sent by the Whites to conquer us, they committed all sorts of atrocities and permitted themselves all the licentious acts that occurred to them. Among other things they took advantage of young girls, even those who were not nubile. They required immature girls to engage in sexual intercourse. They even went so far as to force people to commit incest, uniting mother and son, father and daughter, pointing a gun at their breasts. (1)

1. The fact that the soldiers required that immature girls be delivered over to them, because they were afraid of venereal diseases, is still notorious.

These accusations are so shocking and repugnant that one refuses to admit their veracity. Yet it is possible that they correspond to reality. For one thing, the informants are entirely reliable. For another, the account is internally consistent. As a matter of fact, scenes of the sort described seemed to have occurred at the beginning of almost all colonizations. Their authors were usually the natives of other regions rather than Whites (in our area Europeans were almost entirely absent from the first contacts between the inhabitants and the new power). By the nature of things anything can be expected at such a time. For occupations are carried out under martial law. And *everyone is aware that war unleashes the human beast* which -- as even contemporary history abundantly shows -- is capable of worse and more repugnant excesses.

It is possible to object to all this far, if the assertions of the natives are true, the events they describe did not give rise to a practice of incest and, consequently, need not have given rise to the far-reaching changes which we have observed. [87] But the two situations are entirely different. For licentious behavior between single people is more or less consistent with the passionate tendencies of human nature, which were mostly checked by the fear of a sanction -- a terrible sanction, it is true, but it was shown in fact to be nonexistent. Incest,